



June 17, 2010

Dear Kitchen Cabinet members,

In one of my more recent updates, I told you about the algae problem in several of our neighborhood lakes. The *Tacoma News Tribune* had an [article](#) today talking about that as well. Also, I've found some information on the salaries of professors at state universities, and I think you'll find it shocking, especially given that the state is facing a more than three billion dollar shortfall.

Algae in Lake Waughop



Last month, **I sent a letter to the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department asking them to close Lake Waughop** due to the consistent testing at over 100 times the allowable level for toxins through the spring and summer of last year and throughout the spring this year. This issue was brought to my attention by one of your neighbors, Don Russell, who has studied the prevalence of toxins in Waughop, American, Steilacoom and other local lakes for years.

The health department will not close the lake, but plans to post signs telling people who fish there to release their catch, as the toxin could get in the muscle tissue of fish. [According to the article](#), authorities are also talking with the state's Fish and Wildlife Department about whether to continue stocking the lake. The health department also plans to study what kinds of treatment can be added to the lake to prevent the algae from blooming without damaging fish and plants.

Fortunately, **the state has received a \$750,000 grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to study toxins in Puget Sound area lakes.** The study focuses on 30 lakes in Pierce, King and Snohomish counties that are affected by surface and groundwater containing high concentrations of phosphorus, the nutrient that causes the toxic blooms. I'll keep you up to date on the findings of the study as it progresses.

Why does education cost so much?

In the Building and Industry Association of Washington's recent newsletter, *Building Insight*, there was an article showing exactly how much professors and assistant professors make each year at the University of Washington. I was shocked to learn that dozens of them make over a quarter-million dollars annually (pay and benefits), especially since the state is in such financial dire straits.



For example, Donald Miller, a professor without tenure, makes over \$715,000 in pay and benefits (\$38,879 each MONTH, not including benefits). Scores more make in the four to five hundred thousand dollar range. The article states that the 40 or so listed are just a sample of the state's highest paid UNTENURED professors. I don't believe any professor is worth that much in taxpayer money... **your tax dollars pay these exorbitant salaries.** No wonder education costs so much! Before any legislator even considers another tax increase, the state should take a hard look at reducing the phenomenally high compensation for these individuals. I'd bet the number of students they directly interact with on a daily basis is in the dozens, not the hundreds. **The state has raised taxes and hiked tuition costs because so many faculty members are making ridiculous amounts of money at your expense.**

On a side note, another issue of *Building Insight* breaks down how many state workers make more than \$99,000 per year and where they work. **The Department of Social and Health Services alone has nearly 3,000 employees who cross that mark, followed closely by the Department of Transportation.** Eight other state agencies have between 300 and 700 employees each who make

more than \$99,000 per year. It's yet another area where legislators should look before rashly proposing to raise your taxes yet again.

While many rank and file employees make much less than this, there are some major exceptions which need to be addressed. **You can find all the information about state employee salaries on the website for the [Office of Financial Management](#).**

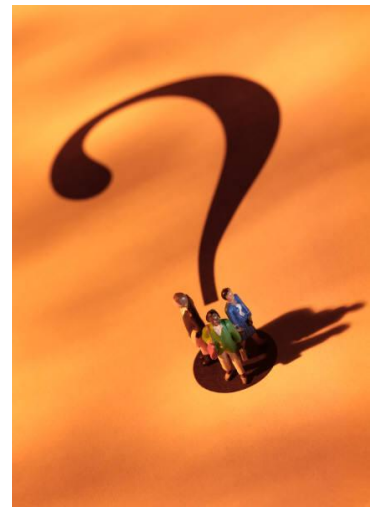
New revenue forecast exposes the majority party's expensive gamble



The state Economic and Revenue Forecast Council came out with new numbers today, and the news is as predicted. The state's economy appears to be recovering slowly, **but the state is still expected to face another multi-billion budget shortfall next year.** The new forecast projects the state will take in \$200 million less than expected in this biennium's budget *that was finalized less than two months ago*. If Congress approves the \$480 million in federal aid majority budget writers counted on – a prospect that right now looks unlikely – then we won't have to scramble to fill a budget gap before the end of the year. **However, if that money does not come through, the state will face closing an immediate shortfall of more than \$200 million with less than a year to go in the current budget.**

Either way, we'll be facing a \$3 billion gap when we convene in January...and that's a conservative estimate. Some figures show it could be upwards of \$5 billion. I suspect that if the federal government doesn't throw some more money at us, the majority party refuses to cut any deeper and taxpayers refuse to be gouged for any more tax increases, the governor could be out on the street in front of the capitol with a tin cup.

What's important to you?



With all of these developments, it figures to be a very concerning time at the state capitol. I'm already beginning to think about legislation for next year but I want to know where you want me to put my focus. **What are your concerns at the state level?**

The simple fact is that the state has made promises it can't keep and is continuing to make promises for the future that it simply can't afford. Without significant changes to the way we do business, we'll have these types of problems for many years to come. As I look forward to next session, I'm very interested in how you feel. If the Legislature has to meet for a special session in the next six months, are you concerned about program cuts? Overspending? More tax increases?

As your state senator, what would you have me do to help find solutions? **Please send me an e-mail with your thoughts or suggestions and let me know what you're thinking.**

In closing...

If you know someone in our district who might be interested in receiving these updates, please feel free to forward this e-mail to him or her.

You can always find information online by visiting my website at www.SenateRepublicans.wa.gov/Carrell.

As always, if you'd like to contact me you can write, phone, e-mail, or stop by. My office phone number is (360) 786-7654, and my home phone number is (253) 581-2859. Or you can write me at **102 Irv Newhouse Building, P.O. Box 40428, Olympia, WA 98504-0428.**



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Sincerely,

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